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of some among the former becoming wrongfully mixed up with the dispute. Genuflections before the altar; the sequence of colors according to the Sarum or any other "use;" and the censuring of persons and things we can fairly leave to the chances of the conflict; but there are other matters we would declare neutral under the guarantee of the general common sense—and among them is music. Not on account of expediency, but from a love of justice the music of the church should be kept free from all entanglement with the Ritualistic quarrel. It has nothing to do with the question, but stands apart, a divine ordinance in harmony with human instinct, and recognized by the universal church as a common possession. The Ritualist, although he may employ it to add to the garniture of his service, cannot drag it down to the level of his symbolic paraphernalia; neither can the Evangelical, unless he have passed into a rabid condition, see in it a trace of the Scarlet Lady. But, spite of all this, church music is not entirely free from danger in connection with the strife now raging. Ritualism has taken it up with enthusiasm, and is working for it with an earnestness which finds a powerful ally in the advancing taste of the community at large. Setting an example of considering Church music altogether apart from polemics—we say that in this matter Ritualism has done well. Reform was needed, and, naturally enough, the reformers are found in those who make the impressiveness of worship a cardinal point. Every sober-minded man will accept the result of their work with a gratitude in no way diminished by its accidental connection with much he may possibly feel bound to repudiate. But, unfortunately, religious controversy is a mortal enemy to sober-mindedness; and we are by no means sure that an efficient musical service is not even now looked upon in many quarters with suspicion or dislike. History has the credit of repeating itself; and we know the lesson of the past upon this very matter. When the early Nonconformists separated from the Church, unable in their protesting zeal to distinguish between things that differed, they repudiated the effective praise of God along with the obnoxious supremacy of the king; and classing the organ with the altar, would have nothing to do with either. What religious warfare has done once, it is not unlikely to do again. In point of fact, whenever a section of the religious world feels under a call to come out from among its fellow Christians and be separate, it is willing to go any lengths in the way of bearing testimony against them. In this lies the danger to Church music which we desire to point out as a preliminary step to its avoidance. The Ritualist leavens the whole lump of his services with music; the Evangelical, if he be true to the traditions of religious warfare, protests by reducing to a minimum the work of those who sit "in quires and places where they sing." High Church provides an elaborate setting of the Nicene Creed; Low Church retorts by reading the Psalms for the day. The one spares neither pains nor expense to make the choral service a worthy offering; the other, in reply, makes an ostentatious parade of neglecting the choral service altogether. Against this we should have nothing to say if Church music, as we find it among the Ritualists, were really an essential part of the machinery by which it is hoped to revive the influence of sacramentalism and priestcraft. So far from this being the case, the perfection

of High Church music is one redeeming feature in the High Church movement, deserving to be imitated rather than to be looked upon with ill-concealed suspicion, or avowed dislike.

We plead, then, for the neutral position of music in the struggle now assuming such proportions. Surely the opposing parties have essentials enough about which to fight, without making the service of praise a matter for blows. The supernatural powers of the clergy, the efficacy of the sacraments, the legality of the so-called "legal vestments," the lighting of candles, the use of wafers, and the mixed chalice—here are only a few of the many questions awaiting solution by the fortune of war. On these points Ritualist and Evangelical may legitimately "tear each other's eyes;" but let them resist the temptation to drag music into the strife. Let them see in it a common ground for such harmonious action as is possible in our distracted Church—within the bounds of which no weapons of war may come. We notice with pleasure that at some of the choral festivals recently held in various parts of the country, every section of the Church has had its representatives; choirs, surpliced and unsurpliced, meeting as brethren; the voice of the "High" choir boy blending with that of the "Low" woman singer. This is as it should be. Music belongs equally to the entire Church; and, while one section should refrain from putting it forward as a party banner, the other, when it is so put forward, should decline to recognize it in that character. Thus neutralized and made the Luxembourg of warring theologians, there will be a chance for the continued improvement of our Church music. Once looked upon as a sectional test, however, and a needless mischief will be done, which only the labor of many peaceful years can repair.

(From the London Musical World.)

CHURCH CHORAL UNIONS.

A few days ago, while sketching cathedral music from the life, we were compelled, in all fidelity, to present a picture the reverse of agreeable. Happily there is a comparison to it, which, with equal faithfulness, can be painted in brighter colours, and made altogether more pleasant of aspect. To this, partly for its own sake, and partly for the sake of contrast, we invite attention. The rapidly increasing interest taken in the musical service of our parish churches, and the improvement resulting therefrom, have failed to obtain the notice they deserve; not from any want of importance, but because the public mind has been preoccupied by more stirring events. Behind the great conflict of opinion and practice upon which every eye is still fixed, a transformation has been going on, none the less remarkable for being comparatively disregarded. Into its causes we do not mean to enquire, for, whether it be due to Ritualism, to the general advance in the musical taste, or to a greater earnestness of feeling in religious things is of little moment. In presence of the fact itself we can leave with others the settling of this matter.

To estimate rightly the improvement of which we speak, one must recall the condition of parish church music as it was within the memory of those who are still young. This is no difficult task, because the ludicrous associated with the sacred is apt to make a deep impression, and certainly the generality of parish choirs at the time of which we

speak included every element of the comical. In rural districts organs were scarce (and worthy players upon the same still scarcer), the musical service being, for the most part, handed over to the village bassoons, bass viols, and clarionets, which, at the instigation of their *ex officio* leader, the parish clerk, perpetrated upon it all sorts of enormities. Nor did a much better state of things prevail in the towns, since, if there were more organs, there were also more charity children, whose shrill discordant treble was quite as hideous as the noise of the rustic "band" without possessing any of the amusing accompaniments belonging to the latter. Everywhere there existed an apathy towards Church music which not only failed to originate any improvement, but was prepared to tolerate any decadence. Clergymen looked upon the singing in their places of worship as an extra-clerical matter, and therefore no special concern of theirs; congregations were prepared to accept anything the "gallery" chose to give them, and the only zeal to be found anywhere was among the choir itself; but that was "without knowledge," and so pugnacious withal as to render interference dangerous.

The latest and most promising phase of the movement, which has made this condition of things one of the past, is to be found in the choral unions now so popular. The plan of these institutions is as simple as their action seems to be efficient. They have mapped out England into districts, working each by machinery which differs only in matters of detail, the invariable feature being a nominal president, a managing committee, a travelling choir-master, who acts as a visible bond of unity to the union, and an annual festival which (with its attendant dinner) affords the necessary stimulus to perseverance. By means of this inexpensive organization the choral unions are able to reach and benefit the remotest parish, bringing them within the influence of a healthy rivalry, and placing at the disposal of each advantages only obtainable by the united means of all. The result of their labor must have struck even those who have been too careless to ascertain the cause. In the smallest and most obscure of country churches the bird-scarer of the week day now becomes the choir-boy of the Sunday; and the village carpenter or blacksmith, who, under the former dispersion, would have thrown his energies into the "loud bassoon," is proud of the intelligent use to which he can put his own more grateful voice. Time was when rustic music lovers never missed a chance of listening to the singing in the cathedral of their county town. Now, in not a few instances, they are perfectly content—and have reason to be—with what they hear Sunday by Sunday in their own parish churches. This improvement in individual choirs is the end and aim of choral unions, but their most distinctive feature, and that by which, perhaps, they can best be estimated is the annual festival already mentioned. Often held in the mother church of the diocese, and always in the chief town of the district, being moreover attended by considerable show and parade, as well as watched with keen interest by the local public, the annual gathering must be accepted as literally a demonstration—one by which the choral union elects to be judged. It cannot be said that there is any shrinking from the severest test. Hundreds of voices, altogether unused to sing in company, not only attempt, without rehearsal, the full choral

service of the church, but essay that most difficult of musical feats, the processional hymn or chant, with a hardihood that deserves, if it do not always command, success. As a matter of course there are musical imperfections more or less glaring, of which the reporters generally take due note. But, on the other hand, local accounts, even those proceeding from evidently well-informed sources, agree as to the well nigh invariable grandeur and effect of the choral union services. At Eccles "everything from the processional hymn to the finale 'Amen' was sung exceedingly well." At Worcester "the whole of the chants, hymns, and the anthem, were gone through satisfactorily." At Llandaff "the processional Psalm, 121st, was well sung, the immense volume of sound from the thousand voices having a very fine effect." At Liverpool the music was "far in advance of the corresponding service held in the same church last year." And at Bury St. Edmunds the recent festival was pronounced a "decided advance on any of its predecessors." We might take up all our space with such quotations, but these will serve to show that even the infancy of the choral union movement has not been without results able to challenge criticism with some success.

An observation of the numbers attending the various annual festivals will enable us to judge of the interest they excite, and also of the favor in which the movement is held. We confess to some surprise at the magnitude of not a few among these gatherings. For instance, at Bury St. Edmunds there were 600 voices; at Winchester the nave of the cathedral was "nearly filled with singers;" Llandaff mustered 1,000 vocalists; Peterborough, 1,200; and Salisbury as many as 1,900. In the case of smaller associations the numbers have been proportionately as great. Eccles mustered 450 strong; Liverpool (town), 170; Wigan, 200; Chelmsford, 224; and Ramoan, in the far away diocese of Connor, 110, some of whom "crossed the sea from Rathlin Island to be present." Surely a movement which can, year by year, show such a wide-spread earnestness of purpose as these figures imply must be a fact worthy of notice.

While making due allowance for the advance of musical taste, and for the increased interest taken by the laity in the choral service of the Church, it must be conceded that to the clergy is mainly due the credit of bringing about the present hopeful state of things. Without their permission choral unions could not have been organized, and, no less certainly, without their co-operation they could not have succeeded. It is satisfactory to find that, in this instance, the parochial clergy are working side by side with their ecclesiastical superiors. Hardly a festival takes place without the sermon being preached by some dignitary of the Church who, after going through the invariable discussion anent the Temple music, and making the regulation reference to the harps of the Apocalypse, tenders words of hearty encouragement and well-meant advice. Among these preachers have been the Bishop of Oxford, who claimed for the Church's worship "the ten talents of the most gifted, no less than the well-fed lamp and the girt-up loins of the zealous and faithful servant;" the Dean of Ely, who waxed eloquent upon "that one intelligent, thought-uttering, praise-uttering instrument, the human tongue;" and the Rev. Dr. Goulburn, who

described music as "the true harmony of God, descending or condescending into the region of the senses." But the exaltation of music, though the chief, is not the only theme considered to be necessary in a choral festival sermon. A certain class of very good people have a morbid notion that the nearer service music approaches to being a worthy offering, the greater the danger of its becoming simply a performance. So the festival preacher is never without a theme upon which to perorate, and he invariably winds up with an injunction to combine science and sincerity, which may possibly be needed in some cases, and certainly can do harm in none.

We trust enough has been said to awaken an interest in the remarkable advance of Church music among us. As to the improvement itself there can be no doubt that it will act upon the sluggish cathedrals and shame them into progress. This may be a forlorn hope, but pride of place is often a greater incentive to exertion than a sense of duty.

THE QUADRILLE PLAYER.

"You don't know any man who will come on more moderate terms?" said a fashionably dressed lady to a music seller, a few mornings since.

"I assure you," replied he, "the price is exceedingly low. He is an excellent player on the violin, he will execute perfectly to your satisfaction, quadrilles, waltzes, or anything else you may require."

"Mind, I may want him to remain late," said the lady.

"Any time you please," replied the music seller. "He is accustomed to late hours, and he never grumbles. He is an industrious man, and he has a sick daughter to support."

"Indeed," said the lady, "can he play Scotch reels?"

"Capitally," replied the music seller.

"And you are sure he will bring a good harpist with him?"

"You may depend upon it," said he.

"Well, then, I think we may as well engage him," said she, drawing a card from her case and handing it over the counter. "There is my address. We may not want him before half-past nine o'clock, but he had better be with us by half-past eight, if you please. Now mind he does not disappoint me, good morning."

In the attic of a lodging-house, situated in one of the crowded streets of the city, was seated that evening an elderly man, by the side of an almost expiring fire. A small lamp glimmered on the table, casting sufficient light over the apartment to illumine the pallid features of a young girl who was lying on a mattress by the fire, supported with pillows. Everything around betokened abject poverty. The countenance of the man was ruled with lines which misery, and not age, had implanted there; and as he glanced at the patient near him, it might be seen that his grief, though subdued, was intense. Yet he held a violin to his shoulder, and in the midst of this scene of misery, he was playing lively quadrilles.

The invalid was his daughter; she had for some time supported herself by teaching the piano; but ladies and gentlemen, somehow, will insist upon getting a thing done as cheaply as possible, and the spirit of competition being rather briskly kept up, her pupils, one by one, had left her. The daughter of a rich

grocer in the neighborhood had clung to her to the last, but the feeling of the age was too strong, and her last pupil was taken away and placed under the tuition of one who would undertake her musical studies for less compensation. Thus her only hope was gone, and she was about to seek a situation as a governess, when her health failed her, and she was thrown on a bed of sickness. Want of air and exercise are bad aids to the recovery of an invalid, and the seeds of consumption had in her case been too surely sown.

The small clock on the mantel-shelf struck eight, and the man placed his violin in its case, took his hat from a peg and approached the patient. He feared to awaken her, lest the sudden shock should prove too much for her. He had that morning received a summons from the music seller to whom the reader has been already introduced, and as it was the first engagement he had had for the past month, he had accepted it, although in his heart, he feared to leave his daughter even for an hour. Putting out the lamp, and stealing noiselessly from the room, he tapped at a neighboring door, and urgently requested a friend that she would sit with his patient during the time he was compelled to be absent. This she immediately consented to, and our poor musician left the house with a heavy heart to fulfill his evening's engagement.

The windows were one blaze of light—carriages were drawing up to the door—when the quadrille player, with his violin case in his hand, knocked at the door, was admitted, and passed almost unnoticed into the drawing-room, where he was met by the harpist. The guests continued to arrive, and by-and-by the pretty daughter of the hostess, tripping up to the musicians by her mother's desire, requested they would begin to play. The first quadrille was arranged, and the signal being given, our poor violinist mechanically began his labor. Happiness beamed around him. The little coquette who first spoke to him, was the observed of all observers, and was soon entangled in a labyrinth of engagements. Almost unconsciously the eye of the violinist followed her steps throughout the evening. In her's he fancied he saw the features of his own dear daughter, and he felt that *she* too might have been surrounded by friends and admirers had she not been compelled to earn her subsistence by her labor. Whilst our talents are cultivated as mere accomplishments, the most lavish praise is bestowed upon them; but once rely upon them as a means of living, and efforts are quickly made to depreciate them.

Our musician had never felt so completely alone as on this occasion. In his own room, miserable as it was, he still felt an independence. Here, surrounded by pleasure, yet debarred from participating therein, his misery was increased by the contrast. He was *in* the party, but not *of* it—solitary in the midst of society. He had to play until he was told to stop, then to stop until he was told to play again.

Slowly the hours passed away. The thought of his poor invalid daughter becoming almost insupportable; and when, at four o'clock in the morning, the last waltz was called, he felt a relief which it is impossible to describe. At length he received his fee, and was allowed to depart. He wended his way quickly and anxiously toward his dwelling. Arrived at the door, a tremor seized him which he knew not how to account for, and he could scarcely summon sufficient courage to enter.